United Nations DP/2018/21

Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services

Distr.: General
10 July 2018

Original: English

Second regular session 2018
4-7 September 2018, New York
Item 3 of the provisional agenda
Gender equality at UNDP

UNDP gender equality strategy, 2018-2021

Summary

The present report presents the UNDP gender equality strategy, 2018-2021, which is the third such strategy. It articulates the core principles and priorities of the UNDP approach to gender equality and provides entry points for achieving the gender equality targets across the three development settings of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. This strategy also identifies priority areas for signature solution 6 of the Strategic Plan, "strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls". The foundation of this strategy is the vision encompassed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This strategy reflects the recommendations and management response to the 2015 independent evaluation of the UNDP contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment. The strategy is aligned to the requirements of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and to the common chapter of the strategic plans of UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and United Nations Population Fund.

An annex, posted on the Executive Board website, discusses lessons learned in the application of the previous strategy.

Elements of a decision

The Executive Board may wish to: (a) welcome the new UNDP gender equality strategy, 2018-2021 (DP/2018/21), which defines an ambitious agenda for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment across all areas of the work of UNDP; (b) commend UNDP for carrying out a consultative and participatory process in preparing the gender equality strategy, 2018-2021; (c) express appreciation that the new UNDP gender equality strategy, 2018-2021 builds on the achievements of the previous strategy; (d) welcome UNDP mainstreaming of gender across all its development work; and (e) express appreciation for the UNDP commitment to implementing institutional actions to achieve gender mainstreaming.

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I. Introduction

1. This UNDP gender equality strategy, 2018-2021 is the third such strategy. It builds upon lessons learned through implementation of the previous gender equality strategy, 2014-2017, and reflects the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the independent evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan and global and regional programmes, 2014-2017 (DP/2017/32) and the key recommendations and the management response to the 2015 independent evaluation of the UNDP contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment (DP/2016/11, Annex 2). As such, the strategy delineates the UNDP commitment to: (a) strengthen interventions tackling structural changes that accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment rather than engaging primarily in programmes focused on women as beneficiaries; (b) strengthen the integration of gender equality into UNDP work on environment, energy and crisis response and recovery; (c) better align UNDP programming with its corporate messaging on the centrality of gender equality and women's empowerment to the achievement of sustainable development; and (d) build upon institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming such as the Gender Equality Seal and the gender marker which provide measurable standards and incentives to drive progress. This strategy, in line with the common chapter of the strategic plans of UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), also reflects recognition of the paramount importance of partnering across the United Nations system to address the root causes of persistent gender inequalities, including discriminatory practices and social norms, and investing in dedicated gender expertise and capacities throughout the spectrum of UNDP development assistance, particularly in such areas as climate change and crisis prevention and recovery that are critical to the achievement of sustainable development but are too often addressed without a gender lens. In addition, this strategy recognizes the vital importance of UNDP leadership for gender equality as a global advocate, to promote and support women leaders and to foster ownership of and accountability for gender equality within UNDP.

2. Gender equality is a fundamental human right and a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Gender equality is central to UNDP support to countries to implement and achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals as well as other commitments agreed by Member States. The 2030 Agenda envisions a world "of universal respect for human rights and human dignity" in which "every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed." Gender equality is an essential aspect of "leaving no one behind," one of the guiding principles of the 2030 Agenda, as women are over-represented among those furthest behind. With the largest operational platform within the United Nations family, working on the ground in some 170 countries and territories, and with expertise in areas central to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, UNDP is well positioned as the "integrator" for helping countries deliver on the Goals by "connecting the dots" on complex sustainable development issues. UNDP will convene across line ministries and development partners to address the gender dimensions of eradicating poverty, sustaining peace, accelerating structural transformation for sustainable development and building resilience to crises and shocks and to ensure that the experiences, needs and contributions of both women and men are integrated into efforts to achieve sustainable development.

3. This strategy thus articulates the UNDP core principles and priorities for achieving the gender equality targets across the three development settings of the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. The Strategic Plan identifies six cross-cutting signature solutions, one of which, signature solution 6, is to strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The strategy identifies priority areas for signature solution 6 and provides entry points for gender equality in each of the three development settings detailed in the Strategic Plan. As each outcome indicator of the Strategic Plan addresses a range of Sustainable Development Goals, this strategy goes beyond Goal 5 on gender equality to drive achievement across all 17 Goals.

4. The UNDP gender equality strategy is grounded in the requirement that all United Nations entities adopt gender mainstreaming methodology, as mandated by the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action; defined by Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system; guided by the normative frameworks provided in the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women; and reinforced by the Sustainable Development Goals, Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security and related resolutions, and General Assembly resolution 71/243 of 21 December 2016 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. The strategy is also aligned to the requirements of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, to the recommendations of the management response to the 2015 independent evaluation of the UNDP contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment and to the common chapter of the strategic plans of UNDP, UNICEF, UN-Women and UNFPA.

II. Strategic setting

5. In all development settings, there are persistent as well as emerging challenges that have distinct impacts on women and men and are either eroding or have the potential to erode gender equality gains. These challenges include the impacts of climate change and disasters; the rise of protracted conflicts; increasing violent extremism; new forms of violence against women such as cyberbullying; discriminatory social norms, urbanization; continuing migration and displacement; and the challenges of the "Fourth Industrial Revolution" with emerging technologies that are impacting all economies and industries. In addition, demographic trends related to a growing ageing population and a large youth population in some regions have gender dimensions that must be addressed.

6. Despite progress, significant gender inequalities persist, depriving women of rights and opportunities and hampering global progress in all development settings. Political decision-making and governance continue to be dominated by men, with women comprising fewer than 25 per cent of the world's parliamentarians and 18.3 per cent of government ministers.[1] Globally, the prevalence of disabilities among women is higher than in men.[2] In nearly two thirds of countries, women are more likely than men to report food insecurity.[3] Women are disproportionately impacted by crises. Throughout the world, women are disproportionately burdened by unpaid care work, doing two and a half times as much unpaid care and domestic work as men.[4] Women's labour participation is often highly informal, without social protection. The global gender wage gap is 23 per cent.[5] Throughout their lives, women are subject to different forms of gender-based violence and discrimination and denied equal access to legal rights and basic services, including health care, education and justice. Gender inequality negatively impacts the health of millions of women and girls across the globe and denies the whole of society the benefits of a more gender equal world.

[1] Inter-Parliamentary Union.
[2] Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of women and girls with disabilities and the status of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto, July 2017 A/72/227, para 12.
[3] UN-Women. 2018. *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. New York: UN-Women.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.

Figure 1. Global gender gaps

Source: ILO. 2017. *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends for Women*. Geneva: ILO; UN-Women. 2018. *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. New York: UN-Women.

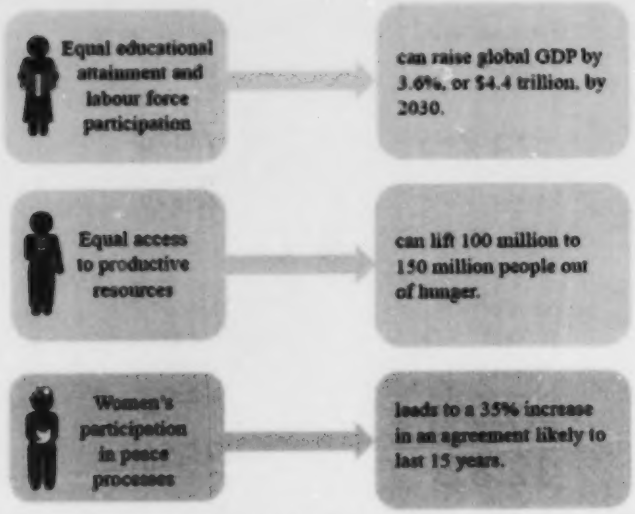
7. The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals underscore that gender equality and the empowerment of women are integral to the achievement of sustainable development. In addition to the nine targets under Goal 5 on gender equality, gender equality is reflected in 36 targets and 54 indicators across the other Goals. These targets focus on poverty reduction, work, agricultural productivity, hunger, health and nutrition, water and sanitation, climate change-related planning, participation in public life and sustainable cities and communities. Closing gender gaps by achieving these targets will have multiplier affects across the Goals and accelerate their achievement. For example, if women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20 to 30 per cent, which could raise total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5 to 4 per cent per annum, and reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12 to 17 per cent.[6] According to an analysis of 182 peace agreements, when women participate as witnesses, signatories, mediators and/or negotiators, resulting agreements are 35 per cent more likely to last at least 15 years.[7] According to UNDP estimates, achieving gender equality in educational attainment and in labour force participation by 2030 can raise global gross domestic product by $4.4 trillion, or 3.6 per cent, and reduce the share of the global population living in extreme poverty ($1.90 a day) by 0.5 percentage points.[8]

[6] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). 2011. *The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-2011: Closing the Gender Gap for Development*. Rome: FAO.

[7] Stone, L. 2015. "Quantitative Analysis of Women's Participation in Peace Processes". In M. O'Reilly et al. 2015. *Reimagining Peacemaking: Women's Roles in Peace Processes*. International Peace Institute.

[8] For details of the analysis see Dugarova, E., Forthcoming, 2018. *Gender Equality as an Accelerator for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals*. New York: UNDP and UN-Women.

Figure 2. Impacts of closing gender gaps



Source: Dugarova, E., Forthcoming 2018. *Gender Equality as an Accelerator for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals*. New York: UNDP and UN-Women; FAO. 2011. *The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11: Closing the Gender Gap for Development*. Rome: FAO; Stone, L. 2015. "Quantitative Analysis of Women's Participation in Peace Processes". In M. O'Reilly et al. 2015. *Reimagining Peacemaking: Women's Roles in Peace Processes*. New York: International Peace Institute.

III. Working in partnership

8. **UNDP is committed to working closely across the United Nations system**, most notably with UN- Women, to support countries to achieve sustainable development. As articulated in the common chapter of the strategic plans of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women, enhanced collaboration calls for United Nations country teams (UNCTs) to undertake joint analyses of issues, enhance efficiency, plan and implement joint programming, enhance multi-stakeholder partnerships, including with the private sector, and support innovative financing for gender equality. Efforts to enhance joint monitoring and evaluation will also be undertaken to strengthen joint learning. Key areas of partnership, as detailed in the annex to the common chapter, include promoting women's participation and leadership in political institutions and processes and preventing and ending gender-based violence, including by addressing harmful practices and changing discriminatory social norms, attitudes and behaviours.

9. UNDP is actively engaged in a range of inter-agency task forces and coordination mechanisms, including the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action and the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality. UNDP also provides technical support to other United Nations agencies to adapt the gender marker and the Gender Equality Seal for their own use.

10. UNDP works closely with UN-Women on system-wide action on gender equality, including on the development of the 'UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard'. The scorecard provides a set of standards to promote improved results for gender equality and women's empowerment, aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals, at the UNCT level. UNDP will continue supporting the implementation and use of the scorecard in the field in coordination with UN-Women and other agencies.

11. UNDP will partner with other United Nations agencies and programmes such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and with regional organizations. UNDP will also partner with the World Bank and other international financial institutions. Areas of collaboration with United Nations agencies are noted throughout this strategy.

12. **UNDP will work at all levels in close partnership with civil society organizations (CSOs),** women's organizations, community-based groups, including disabled persons' organizations, and men and boys to advance gender equality and empower women. UNDP will advocate for the inclusion of gender advocates and women's voices at all levels to achieve the 2030 Agenda and will help countries create space and opportunities for women's organizations and networks and civil society at large to engage effectively in the realization of gender equality and sustainable development.

13. **UNDP will work with partners to expand collaboration with the private sector** which is a critical partner in advancing gender equality and empowering women through better workplace practices and decent work. This includes promoting women's leadership and participation, building inclusive workplaces that are free of harassment and implementing policies to reconcile women's unpaid and paid care responsibilities. UNDP will work closely with UN-Women and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to promote decent work and will continue to prioritize initiatives such as the Gender Equality Seal certification for the private sector. UNDP will work closely with agencies such as UN-Women and United Nations Capital Development Fund to unlock private capital for gender-sensitive investment projects and to expand women's access to financial services.

14. **As a thought leader,** UNDP will work with academia, think tanks and the media to advocate for and support evidence-based research on gender equality and its critical linkage with achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, to strengthen and disseminate UNDP knowledge products, drive innovation and monitor country achievements through existing and new indexes and the UNDP flagship global and regional Human Development Reports. Such partnerships can also inform how new technologies can advance gender equality.

Box 1. Gender equality in the workplace

To close persistent gender equality gaps in the workplace, UNDP has pioneered the **Gender Equality Seal for Public and private enterprises**.

The Gender Equality Seal supports companies to meet gender equality standards in such areas as:

- Eliminating gender pay gaps
- Increasing women's roles in decision-making;
- Developing and implementing work-life balance polices;
- Eradicating sexual harassment at work;
- Enhancing women's access to non-traditional jobs

Since the launch of the initiative in 2009, more than 400 public and private companies in 10 countries have been certified. Begun in Latin America, the initiative is now being expanded to other regions using South-South cooperation.

IV. The UNDP approach to gender mainstreaming and guiding principles for the gender equality strategy

15. Recognizing that gender equality is a precondition and accelerator for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, UNDP is committed to promoting and mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment in all that it does. The UNDP approach to gender mainstreaming is a dual one: UNDP supports the empowerment of women and girls through targeted gender-specific interventions and also addresses gender concerns in developing, planning, implementing and evaluating all policies and programmes. To achieve this, UNDP will rely on gender analysis and sex-disaggregated data and pursue integrated, cross-sectoral approaches to address interconnected development challenges. UNDP gender mainstreaming is grounded in the core principles articulated below.

16. **Human rights**. This strategy pursues a human rights-based approach to development. UNDP will ensure: that programme design is based on research and analysis of gaps in the realization of the human rights of women and men; that human rights principles and standards are applied in all phases of the programme cycle; and that situation analysis, performance monitoring and reporting explicitly document progress in achieving gender equality, in line with the principles and standards of the Beijing Platform for Action, Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, other human rights treaties including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and global and regional commitments.

17. This strategy is premised on the notion that the Sustainable Development Goals can only be achieved when all people have opportunities to achieve their aspirations and fulfil their potential and when their knowledge and contributions are valued and mobilized. It views **all women and men as active agents of change** and thus focuses on ensuring that those marginalized and left behind are empowered and have the agency to make decisions over their lives and participate in the development of their societies. As such, interventions supported by **UNDP will go beyond counting numbers of beneficiaries by sex and will focus on empowering and creating agency for women** and men and closing gender gaps.

18. This strategy also affirms the UNDP commitment to support partners to address **multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination**, such as those based on poverty, geographic location, migration, identity, ethnicity, age, race, religion, disability and other characteristics. Leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first requires improving capacities to analyse and target populations affected by multiple forms of discrimination.

19. This strategy acknowledges that **transforming gender and power relations** is essential for achieving gender equality and sustainable development. UNDP will pursue initiatives that accelerate structural transformations for gender equality and remove the institutional, societal, political and legal barriers hindering its achievement. This includes working with partners, including faith-based and traditional leaders, to address the root causes of gender inequalities and change the discriminatory social norms, attitudes and practices that deny women and girls rights and opportunities.

20. An important aspect of this strategy, in alignment with the 'HeforShe' initiative, the United Nations global solidarity movement for gender equality, is **engaging men and boys** both as allies in closing gender gaps and in empowering women and girls but also to address discriminatory attitudes and practices and oppressive forms of masculinity that impact both women and men. This is particularly important in preventing and responding to all forms of gender-based violence as well as addressing the unequal distribution of roles and opportunities of women, men, girls and boys, both at home and in public spheres. Approaches can include public awareness campaigns showcasing positive masculinities, such as the benefits of men's engagement in caregiving and enhancing capacities of men and boys for inclusive engagements at household, community and policy levels, across different sectors and generations.

21. Recognizing that UNDP works in partnerships with Governments and in a range of country contexts, UNDP will follow a contextualized and country-driven approach, with its primary role being to leverage its integrated country platforms to address challenges requiring multi-sectoral responses, including discriminatory norms and standards, and to mobilize partnerships across the United Nations system to support country-specific efforts to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of achieving the 2030 Agenda.

22. **Innovation** is a critical aspect of UNDP gender work. Advancing gender equality calls for innovative approaches, from community conversations on difficult topics to behaviour-change campaigns to challenge discriminatory social norms and practices that are at the heart of gender inequality. Technological innovations, from mobile banking applications to new clean energy, can eliminate structural and societal barriers that prevent women from accessing financial and other services and break traditional patriarchal supply chains of information, resources and power. UNDP can also leverage its own experience in incentivizing performance on gender equality through its Gender Equality Seal to support partner countries to innovate tools for advancing gender equality in the private and public sectors.

V. Signature solution 6: Strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

23. While UNDP has a commitment to promote gender equality and mainstream gender in all its work, signature solution 6 focuses attention on the deep-rooted structural barriers that perpetuate gender inequality and hinder sustainable development. Signature solution 6 is not meant to be implemented in isolation, but rather is an integral part of all signature solutions. By focusing on key priority areas for signature solution 6, UNDP can achieve the transformational change that will advance gender equality and accelerate the achievement of sustainable development. The priority areas are: removing structural barriers to women's economic empowerment, including women's disproportionate burden of unpaid care work; preventing and responding to gender-based violence; promoting women's participation and leadership in all forms of decision-making; and strengthening gender-responsive strategies in crisis (conflict and disaster) prevention, preparedness and recovery.

24. **Removing structural barriers to women's economic empowerment, including women's disproportionate burden of unpaid work.** Active measures are needed to comprehensively address the structural barriers and gender-discriminatory practices that deny women their socioeconomic rights, restrict their economic, social and political opportunities and undermine their resilience to all forms of shock. This requires addressing women's disproportionate burden of unpaid care work, including by engaging men in care work;[9] ensuring women's equal rights to property, credit, land and natural resources, decent work and equal access to basic services, including sexual and reproductive health services. It requires strengthening national capacities to generate and use sex- and age-disaggregated data for gender analysis and gender budgeting, which is key to the design of gender-responsive macro-economic policy and social protection programmes. It requires leveraging UNDP support for national Sustainable Development Goal planning processes, including through mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support (MAPS) missions, to draw the linkages between gender equality and progress across the Goals. Together, such reforms will have multiplier effects on progress across the Goals, helping to advance efforts related to Goal 1 on ending poverty, Goal 3 on health and well-being, Goal 4 on quality education, Goal 5 on gender equality, Goal 8 on decent work, Goal 10 on reduced inequalities, Goal 13 on climate action and others. Important partners to advance this agenda include UN-Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNAIDS, ILO, the World Bank, regional development banks, regional economic and social commissions, CSOs and the private sector.

[9] Caring for families, children, the elderly, the ill, the disabled and gathering food, firewood, fuel and water.

25. **Preventing and responding to gender-based violence**. Gender-based violence, which occurs on every continent and in every country and predominantly impacts women and girls, is a grave violation of the most basic human rights and fundamental freedoms and carries both a steep health and economic toll for survivors and their families and an economic toll for communities and countries. UNDP will draw attention to the critical linkage between gender-based violence and Sustainable Development Goal achievement, such as Goal 1 on ending poverty, Goal 3 on health and well-being, Goal 10 on reduced inequalities and Goal 16 on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, providing access to justice for all and building inclusive institutions, and will support national authorities to plan cross-sectoral initiatives to address and reduce such violence. UNDP will work closely with national partners on legal and policy frameworks and to support national capacities to prevent violence and end impunity for perpetrators and ensure access to justice and protection of women and girls, especially those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discriminations such as those living with disabilities. UNDP will work closely with United Nations partners, especially UN-Women, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNICEF and OHCHR, as well as with civil society, the private sector and men and boys. Flagship initiatives include the United Nations-European Union Spotlight Initiative to End Violence Against Women and the Secretary-General's UNiTE Campaign to End Violence Against Women.

26. **Promoting women's participation and leadership in all forms of decision-making.** This priority draws attention to the critical importance of women's participation and leadership in all forms of decision-making, including in political office constitutional bodies, public administration, the judiciary, the private sector and in local, regional and global fora on climate action, disaster risk reduction, disarmament, conflict prevention, peacebuilding and post-crisis recovery. To this end, UNDP will support national partners to adopt and implement legal and policy reforms to ensure women's participation in decision-making and will implement initiatives to develop women's capacities to participate and lead. Key initiatives include the gender equality in public administration initiative. UNDP will continue to work closely with partners, especially UN-Women, the United Nations Department of Political Affairs, Inter-Parliamentary Union and regional normative bodies to advance global norms and national practices to further women's leadership in politics and public institutions. UNDP will work closely with women's organizations to support women's leadership and will support gender equality and women's leadership in the workplace, including through implementation of the Gender Equality Seal.

27. **Strengthening gender-responsive strategies in crisis (conflict and disaster) prevention, preparedness and recovery.** While crises, both due to conflict and disaster, affect everyone, women and girls are often disproportionately impacted due to their relatively disadvantaged situation, distinct social obligations and responsibilities and the high prevalence of gender-based violence. At the same time, during and after crises, women are often on the frontlines, playing a key role in ensuring the well-being and resilience of their families and communities. "Building back better" means ensuring that gender equality and women's participation are integrated into crisis prevention, preparedness and recovery from the earliest stages. UNDP will underpin conflict prevention and crisis preparedness and recovery efforts with gender analysis, gender-disaggregated data and the meaningful participation of women and women's organizations in decision-making. UNDP-supported recovery and stabilization initiatives will be designed to create opportunities for women to contribute to and participate in sustainable livelihoods and improve their socioeconomic status. UNDP will work with other United Nations agencies, regional organizations and civil society partners to ensure that women's voices and their experiences are brought to initiatives to prevent and address violent extremism. Key initiatives include the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (with UN-Women and UNFPA), which supports women's grass-roots organizations in post-crisis settings; implementation of the Peacebuilding Fund's Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (with the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund); and the Global Focal Point Arrangement on Justice and Security (with the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, UN-Women and OHCHR), which provides access to justice and builds the rule of law for survivors of gender-based violence in crises and post-crisis settings.

VI. Three development settings and entry points for mainstreaming gender

28. The UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 prioritizes development actions to be undertaken across three diverse development contexts, which form the three outcomes of the plan: (a) a context where eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is a primary focus; (b) a context where accelerating structural transformations for sustainable development is prioritized; and (c) a context where building resilience to shocks and crises is needed. In some cases, these contexts co-exist within the same country and require tailored solutions that can adequately address specific deficits and barriers. Entry points for addressing gender equality, empowering women and meeting the commitment to leave no one behind in each of them follow.

Outcome 1: Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions

29. It is not possible to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions without addressing the specific gender inequalities that keep women in poverty. Globally, there are 122 women aged 25-34 living in extreme poverty for every 100 men of the same age group.[10] Women are also more likely than men to live below 50 per cent of the median income.[11] The impacts of climate change also exacerbate women's poverty. Successful poverty eradication requires dismantling structural barriers, ensuring that women's responsibility for unpaid care work is reduced and redistributed, and that women have access to decent work and equitable wages, energy and water, land and property, financial services and credit, productive tools and resources, social care services and social protection. It also requires transforming discriminatory attitudes and practices, including gender-based violence, that prevent women and girls from participating equally in economic, social and political life. Eradicating poverty requires addressing multiple forms of discrimination, which can change over the life course, such as those associated with youth and ageing. Strategic entry points for mainstreaming gender equality across this outcome of the Strategic Plan include:

(a) Supporting countries to integrate gender equality and women's empowerment into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and other internationally agreed instruments and into regional, national and local development planning. This requires addressing gender equality in MAPS missions and ensuring that UNDP support for Sustainable Development Goal planning and implementation at all levels is gender-responsive, draws attention to the linkages between gender equality and the acceleration of all the Goals and supports national and local plans and budgets to address underlying gender inequalities that impede progress towards the Goals;

(b) Supporting national and local partners to expand women's access to and control of resources and basic services, including financial and non-financial assets, housing, jobs, education, clean energy and technology, health, including HIV and sexual and reproductive health services, social protection (including health insurance and pensions) and care services, with a particular focus on the most marginalized and left behind, including poor women and women with disabilities;

(c) Supporting partners to end occupational segregation and address women's and girls' disproportionate burden of unpaid work and time poverty through measures such as affordable and reliable public and private care services (child, elder, disability or illness), as well as gender-equal parental leave and work-life balance rights and policies. Similarly, working with partners to invest in critical infrastructure such as water and sanitation, and clean and affordable energy, safe roads, gender-responsive public spaces and services such as markets and transportation, can all reduce the time women spend on care activities;

(d) Supporting legal and policy reforms to close the gender wage gap, lift formal and informal barriers to women's access to certain occupations and educational fields, and strengthen women's legal protection from workplace discrimination and rights violations;

[10] UN-Women. 2018. *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. New York: UN-Women.
[11] Ibid.

(e) Supporting national and local institutions to analyse risk from a gender perspective and involve women and women's organizations in the formulation and implementation of risk management, reduction and recovery policies;

(f) Supporting partners to ensure gender-responsive sustainable management of natural resources, including land, water and forests, and to expand women's access to, control and ownership of land, property and finance as well as to partnerships in new micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises established on green and inclusive value chains;

(g) Supporting Governments to ensure that women have equal access to clean, affordable and sustainable energy. This will include supporting women as consumers, decision makers and entrepreneurs in the transition to clean energy systems;

(h) Supporting measures to increase and track women's leadership in decision-making in the private and public sectors and in public administration, including in government, line ministries and decentralized governance;

(i) Supporting national efforts to develop and implement legal and policy frameworks to prevent and address gender-based violence. This includes supporting national partners to provide multisectoral support and services for survivors, supporting research and public awareness campaigns on the prevention of and response to gender-based violence and the most effective policies to reach out to the most marginalized groups; and engaging men and boys to change behaviour around gender-based violence

Outcome 2: Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development

30. Gender inequalities are among the primary inequalities that must be addressed to accelerate the structural transformations required to sustain development progress. Women hold just 23.7 per cent of parliamentary seats, an increase of 10 percentage points compared to 2000 but still far below parity.[12] The global gender pay gap is 23 per cent and globally, women's labour force participation is 49 per cent compared to 76 per cent for men.[13] When women play a full and equal role in social, economic and political life, economies are stronger and communities are more inclusive and resilient. As such, active measures are needed to comprehensively address structural barriers and gender-discriminatory practices that deny women their rights, are harmful to their health and well-being, restrict their economic, social and political opportunities and undermine their resilience to cope with increasing challenges posed by environmental degradation and climate change. These include measures to: advance women's political participation at all levels; adopt legal, policy and institutional reforms to remove gender-based discrimination in laws, labour markets; and increase women's access to and control over assets and services. Strategic entry points for mainstreaming gender across this outcome include:

(a) Supporting Governments to ensure that regional, national and local development policies, plans and budgets incorporate gender-responsive solutions for climate change adaptation and mitigation;

(b) Ensuring women's access to training, decent work, technology and financing opportunities to facilitate their participation in zero-carbon development;

(c) Supporting national partners to adopt and implement gender-responsive labour market policies and transform labour markets both to eliminate gender wage gaps and gender-based job segregation and to expand women's opportunities for decent work and advance gender equality in the public and private sectors. UNDP will partner with the World Bank, UNICEF, ILO and UN-Women, and will leverage lessons learned in Latin America to continue expanding the UNDP Gender Equality Seal certification programme for public and private enterprise;

[12] Inter-Parliamentary Union.
[13] ILO, World Employment Social Outlook Trends 2017.

(d) Supporting Governments to use digital technology and big data to expand women's access to public registration and identification cards that would improve their benefits from public services, including credit, health care and market information;

(e) Strengthening institutional capacities for policy and legal reforms to accelerate women's participation in decision-making. This includes initiatives to increase women's participation as voters and candidates; to increase young women's civic engagement; to promote women's participation in transitional and constitutional bodies; and to strengthen parliamentary capacities for gender-responsive legislation;

(f) Supporting countries to adopt and implement legal and regulatory reforms and capacity development initiatives to open space for women's CSOs and increase their participation and effectiveness in contributing to sustainable development;

(g) Supporting national institutions and engaging community leaders to implement the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and gender-related obligations of other human rights treaties; support women's access to justice through both formal and informal systems; and increase women's leadership in the judicial, security and legal sectors;

(h) Ensuring the integration of gender equality into legal and regulatory frameworks, policies and institutions addressing biodiversity conservation, the sustainable use of natural resources and the equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of such resources or related knowledge and practices. This includes ensuring women's full participation in decision-making on the use, management and protection of ecosystems.

Outcome 3. Build resilience to shocks and crisis

31. Gender equality and women's empowerment are integral to building individual, institutional and societal resilience. Systemic inequalities, especially those between women and men in the economic, social and political spheres, exacerbate the impact of economic, environmental and political shocks, which impedes sustainable recovery and durable peace. For example, climate change has a disproportionate impact on women and children. In times of conflict, rates of homicide and other forms of violent crime increase significantly. While men are more likely to be killed on the battlefield, during conflict women are subjected to sexual violence and abducted, tortured and forced to leave their homes. Strengthening the resilience of women enables countries to better respond to disasters and crises whether these are induced by environmental, economic or social factors, and to ensure that crises, including health emergencies, do not exacerbate gender inequalities, for example by increasing women's unpaid work responsibilities. When crisis prevention, preparedness and recovery processes, including restoration of governance institutions, meet the needs of women as well as men and advance gender equality, communities can build back better and become more resilient. Strategic entry points for mainstreaming gender across this outcome of the Strategic Plan include:

(a) Supporting countries to prepare for shocks, crises and recovery by regularizing land tenure and legal documentation, including identification documents, as well as identifying and giving women and men equal access to insurance schemes;

(b) Ensuring that post-disaster and peacebuilding needs assessments and recovery planning are gender-responsive, addressing the needs of men and women, especially in areas such as health, security, safe drinking water and sanitation, housing and education, and that women are part of decision-making processes;

(c) Designing market-based employment and livelihood opportunities in crisis and post-crisis settings that do not reinforce gender stereotypes and that benefit women and girls by providing them with skills and opportunities for decent work and sustainable employment and by preventing gender-based violence;

(d) Supporting partners to promote the role of women and women's organizations in peacebuilding and the countering and prevention of violent extremism and ensuring that policies

and plans to prevent violent extremism address the gender dimensions of extremist ideology and recognize the roles, strengths and knowledge women bring to their design and implementation;

(e) Working in crisis countries to remove barriers, including legal barriers, to women's participation in traditionally male-dominated sectors;

(f) Supporting partners to implement Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security and on youth, peace and security and facilitating the participation of women, including young women, in decision-making forums in conflict and post-conflict contexts, including in conflict mediation, negotiations, peacebuilding and mechanisms to build consensus and reduce social tensions. UNDP will establish programmes to protect rights activists and strengthen women's coalitions, including of young women, to advance peace and security;

(g) Ensuring that innovative solutions scaled for sustainable, nature-based recovery are developed on the basis of women's participation and recognize and respond, through gender analysis, to the needs, concerns and contributions of women;

(h) Ensuring women's participation in decisions regarding the provision of sustainable energy solutions in crisis-affected communities and that women benefit equally from employment opportunities and improved access that expanded services may provide;

(i) Ensuring that women and women's groups participate in conflict prevention and disaster risk reduction and long-term resilience planning and action from the earliest stages, including through their engagement in designing and operationalizing gender-sensitive early warning systems and preparedness;

(j) Strengthening national capacities to ensure gender-responsive aid coordination and financial management;

(k) Taking measures to prevent and address gender-based violence in crisis settings, including by addressing the needs of men and boys to tackle the root causes of violence and supporting provision of redress for conflict-related abuses and violations that women face through transitional processes.

VII. Institutional transformation to achieve gender equality results

32. UNDP is committed to full implementation of the principles and requirements of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. UNDP will work with UN-Women, as the leader within the United Nations system for the System-wide Action Plan, to achieve full compliance, and will report annually to UN-Women on progress in this regard.

Leadership for gender equality

33. Leadership for gender equality consists of vision, passion and commitment. It requires changing gender power structures and discriminatory practices, both formal and informal, within the organization and in programmatic/policy work. A strong commitment to gender equality stems from the top. In alignment with the System-wide Action Plan and the commitments of both the Secretary-General and the UNDP Administrator as international gender champions, UNDP leadership and senior management will consistently champion gender equality as integral to the work of UNDP and the achievement of sustainable development. This includes the following:

(a) Senior management will include gender equality and the empowerment of women in public speeches, statements and advocacy efforts;

(b) Senior management will ensure gender balance in meeting delegations and UNDP-hosted panels and UNDP events;

(c) Following the commitment of the Secretary-General, UNDP senior managers also will "ensure that where possible on all country visits" they will "meet with women's CSOs and/or visit a programme focused on furthering gender equality and women's empowerment."

Box 2. Gender equality checklist for country office management:

- ✓ Develop and implement a gender equality strategy for the country office;
- ✓ Establish an effective gender architecture and gender expertise;
- ✓ Adequately implement a gender accountability framework;
- ✓ Implement the UNDP gender parity strategy;
- ✓ Lead by example, fostering an inclusive and respectful organizational culture.

Accountability and oversight

34. UNDP will continue integrating accountability for gender equality results within its overall accountability framework. Accountability will be complemented with incentives for staff to work more effectively on gender equality. The key components of this framework include:

(a) A **chain of accountability** for gender equality. The implementation of this strategy begins in the Office of the Administrator and continues to bureau directors and country representatives who are responsible for delivering gender equality results on the ground;

(b) The UNDP **Gender Steering and Implementation Committee** chaired by the Administrator and meeting annually at a minimum. The committee will monitor implementation of the gender equality strategy, provide policy guidance to the organization and serve as a peer review group.* The committee's recommendations will be binding;

(c) **The UNDP Executive Board,** the primary oversight mechanism for UNDP implementation of the gender equality strategy.* UNDP will continue to report annually to the Executive Board on progress towards implementation of this strategy;*

(d) **Gender-responsive staff performance management**. UNDP will ensure that implementation of the gender equality strategy and the gender parity action plan are recognized as a criterion of good performance in performance assessment of all senior and middle managers. Senior managers will be expected to identify those elements of the gender equality strategy that are relevant to the work of their unit/offices, agree with their staff which outputs can be achieved and track compliance with this agreement through their respective performance plans and assessments;

(e) The **UNDP corporate monitoring system** (results-based management) and tools, which will continue mainstreaming gender equality and the empowerment of women to enable the organization to assess progress toward the three development outcomes established in the Strategic Plan;*

(f) **Auditing and evaluation**. All UNDP evaluations will be designed and implemented in accordance with the norms and standards for evaluation in the United Nations system, including the gender-related norms and standards.*[14] Implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy will be evaluated at least once. Gender will be included in risk-based audit undertaken by the organization annually;

* Denotes a requirement of the System-wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

[14] United Nations Evaluation Group, 2005. *Standards for Evaluation in the United Nations System* and *Norms for Evaluation in the United Nations System*.

(g) **Resource tracking.** UNDP will continue to implement and improve the gender marker as the primary tool for tracking resource allocations for gender equality in the organization.*

Policy, planning and programming

35. UNDP will actively consider gender equality and women's empowerment in all stages of the programming cycle. Ensuring **gender-responsive policy and planning** at all levels offers clarity and guidance for staff for integrating gender equality and women's empowerment into UNDP activities and increases accountability for gender equality results.

36. **Country/regional programme documents, programmes and projects** are required to be informed by gender analysis.* The programme/project rationale must address structural barriers to gender equality and the priority areas should identify concrete changes to advance gender equality in at least one area of intervention. The corresponding results and resources frameworks must include at least one gender-specific outcome and indicative outputs and indicators.

37. UNDP country offices and business units are encouraged to develop a **gender equality strategy** and implementation plan which translates the corporate strategy into concrete actions and budget allocations relevant to the country programme.

38. UNDP will seek to progressively increase programming which specifically addresses gender equality through its programmatic work. Therefore, UNDP will aim during the period of this strategy to eventually achieve having 15 per cent of all country programme and project budgets allocated to advancing gender equality and/or empowering women as their principal objective. (Gender marker indicator GEN-3).

The Gender Equality Seal as an innovation for organizational change

39. The UNDP Gender Equality Seal incentivizes country offices to integrate gender equality into all aspects of their development work. Launched in 2011, the Gender Equality Seal serves as **a certification programme and learning platform** to support country offices/units to address gaps, document and share innovation and knowledge and advance organizational change for gender equality. Since 2011, more than 50 country offices have been awarded a bronze, silver or gold certification. Over the period of the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, UNDP will expand the Gender Equality Seal to ensure that more country offices benefit from capacity-building and organizational change for gender equality.

40. The UNDP Gender Equality Seal is also gaining global recognition and UNDP is also now a service provider for other United Nations entities and partners who are seeking to establish their own gender seal certification standards and incentivize better performance for gender equality. To leverage its expertise in implementing the Gender Equality Seal, UNDP will offer advisory support to partners within and outside the United Nations system to learn from UNDP best practice.

Gender capacities

41. The gender architecture and capacities of UNDP will be aligned with United Nations system-wide requirements on gender mainstreaming, such as those called for in General Assembly resolution 71/243 of 21 December 2016 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and in the System-wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. They will include global, regional and country-level capacities on gender equality required to implement this strategy.

42. Gender equality and the empowerment of women will be integrated into the core values and/or competencies for all staff, particularly those at P-4 level and above.*

43. Additionally, UNDP requires all country offices to have multidisciplinary gender focal teams led by senior management (deputy resident representative/country director). These teams will bring together operations and programme staff to ensure gender mainstreaming in the programme portfolio; monitor and evaluate gender equality results; and address institutional issues including

gender parity, enabling environment and gender-sensitive communications. These capacities will not supplement but rather complement dedicated gender expertise.

44. In addition to the gender focal teams, it is recommended that country offices have a dedicated gender specialist who can provide technical backstopping to programme and operational units, as well lead on developing and implementing gender-focused and women-specific programmes, building partnerships with women's movements and shaping the country office's advocacy on gender.[15] UNDP will work with United Nations agencies, multilateral and bilateral partners and academic and civil society networks on the ground to augment technical expertise and create pools of experts to draw upon where appropriate.

45. UNDP will strive to ensure that all trainings, communities of practice and other learning opportunities incorporate sessions on gender equality and women's empowerment led by a gender expert.

Inclusive, diverse and safe environment for all

46. UNDP is determined to create an **inclusive, diverse and harmonious working environment** that respects the dignity of all persons. Promoting a culture of equality, dignity and respect requires changing values and beliefs that maintain hierarchies and reinforce exclusionary norms that create inequality. An inclusive and safe organization requires a gender-balanced and diverse workforce with zero tolerance for all prohibited conduct.

47. In line with the new United Nations Gender Parity Strategy promulgated by the Secretary-General and as detailed in the UNDP gender parity strategy, 2018-2021, UNDP aims to maintain full **gender parity** among all staff and attain full parity among all senior management roles by 2019 and at each grade level[16] by 2021. UNDP aims to attain tangible progress in transforming its culture and the quality of its working environment, whereby all staff have equal opportunities to grow, progress in their careers and make a difference in the atmosphere of respect, care, and flexibility, free from any bias, discrimination or harassment. UNDP recently approved a gender parity strategy in line with the System-wide Action Plan.

48. UNDP **will not tolerate harassment and/or abuse of authority** at the workplace or relating to work in any form. Such behavior or conduct is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, the Staff Regulations and Rules and the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service. The UNDP policy on workplace harassment and abuse of authority will be made available to the Executive Board.

49. **Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse** represent a failure of protection which brings harm to those whom we are mandated to serve. United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules prohibit sexual exploitation and abuse.[17] A link to the UNDP web page on combatting sexual exploitation and abuse, including the United Nations policy and other useful information, is available here.

50. UNDP has a number of measures in place to prevent and respond to sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse. These include the planned establishment of a free, 24-hour, international and confidential helpline to allow staff to report incidences of harassment or abuse and receive counseling, a strengthened policy on protection against retaliation and mandatory courses related to ethics, harassment, discrimination and abuse of authority in the workplace, and sexual exploitation and abuse.

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15 Evaluation of UNDP gender mainstreaming 2005. Strengthen gender expertise in country offices, page 48. <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/EO_GenderMainstreaming.pdf>

16 UNDP will strive and attain full parity (50/50) with the understanding that the United Nations strategy allows for a margin of 3 per cent for women's representation in roles or offices where attaining full parity is particularly challenging.

17 Sexual exploitation means any actual or attempted abuse of position of vulnerability, differential power or trust, for sexual purposes, including but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Sexual abuse means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.